



2017  
olive cotton award  
for photographic portraiture

21 July - 8 October 2017

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The Olive Cotton Award for photographic portraiture is a \$20,000 biennial national award for excellence in photographic portraiture dedicated to the memory of photographer Olive Cotton. The winning work is acquired for the Gallery's Collection. The exhibition is selected from entrants across Australia and is a significant opportunity for photographers living and working in Australia.

The Award was launched in 2005, and is funded by Olive Cotton's family and dedicated to her memory as one of Australia's leading twentieth century photographers. The Award has grown and gained national recognition attracting entries from well known and emerging photographers across Australia. The Award boasts a major acquisitive biennial prize of \$20,000, selected by the Award judge. In addition, the Friends of the Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc. fund \$4000 for the acquisition of portraits chosen by the Gallery Director for the Collection. Visitors to the exhibition may also vote for their 'people's choice', which awards \$250 for to the most popular finalist.

The Gallery thanks art dealer Josef Lebovic and photographer Sally McInerney, Olive Cotton's daughter, for their ongoing support of the Award. Thanks also to the Friends of the Gallery committee for their contributions, both financial and practical, to the Award and opening event.

**2017 Judge: Shaune Lakin**

Shaune Lakin is Senior Curator Photography, National Gallery of Australia (NGA). Shaune was previously Gallery Director, Monash Gallery of Art (MGA), in Melbourne. MGA is Australia's only public gallery dedicated to collecting Australian photography and over a nearly 30-year period has built a nationally significant collection.

Previously, Shaune was Senior Curator of Photography at the Australian War Memorial, where he wrote the first major history of Australian conflict photography, and before that Curator of International Art at NGA.

He has been a lecturer in art history and theory at the University of Melbourne, where he completed his PhD in photographic history in 2002.

Shaune has written widely on Australian and international photography and curated many exhibitions, the most recent of which include *Photography meets feminism: Australian women photographers 1970s-80s* (2014), *Max & Olive: The photographic life of Olive Cotton and Max Dupain* (2016-17) and, with his colleague Anne O'Hehir, *Colour my world: handcoloured Australian photography* (2015), *The world is beautiful* (2016) and *Mexican modernism* (2017).

## Boom time

Shaune Lakin

While it is tempting to say it of our own time, there is really nothing new in the statement that photography has radically transformed the way we create and circulate images of ourselves and each other.

Photography has always and almost continuously transformed the category of pictures we call 'portraiture'. In the nineteenth century it made the portrait more accessible, some say more 'democratic'. Just as it does now, the medium's reproducibility rendered the photographic portrait more amenable to the elaboration of social networks: we can still sift through albums compiled in the nineteenth century full of *cartes de visite* of a person's friends, family and acquaintances, while in these albums plebeians like me could photographically sit alongside the rich and powerful. And just as the contemporary social media self-portrait is radically transforming the way that we construct and perform our autobiographies, earlier photographic portraits encouraged or assisted new ways of organising ourselves as populations and social groups.

But the scale of photographic portraiture today is kind of unfathomable. Apparently we shared about 24 billion selfies in 2015, and who knows how many photographs of friends sitting opposite the dinner table or of children doing this or that are among the more than one trillion photographs we will take and share this year. All of this has had a huge impact, not just on the social practice of photographic portraiture but on its form. Think, for example, about the way that

the digital selfie phenomenon has produced a new portrait pose, one that views the face from above and highlights forehead, raised eyebrow and pouty lips.

For most of us, the time spent consuming these digital portraits is pretty fleeting. These portraits are, and are intended to be, ephemeral – just enough to warrant a quick like, and then gone. This is not to diminish the social and political power of the social media portrait's idealisation of its subject, but simply to acknowledge that the viewing conditions are for the most part cursory and momentary.

With these viewing conditions in mind, it has been a somewhat strange process sifting through the 490 or so entries viewed primarily as digital files for this year's Olive Cotton Award. For a start, this process is undertaken 'blindly', ostensibly without any context: without knowledge of a maker's identity, or details about where the image was taken or who it shows. These 'blind' conditions cultivate a very particular way of looking. In the first instance, you tend to give each image a similar level of attention, although some by their nature demand a longer view. (And it would be disingenuous to say that you don't recognise the work of some makers.) It also encourages you to focus not just on those attributes that are consistent between pictures (which we tend to do in the social media environment), but also on points of difference: not just differences that exist between subjects themselves, but in the countenance of the photographs.

So many of the portraits I stopped to linger over appeared to slow down the photographic exchange, and to an extent the world itself. It is as if the photographic portrait can carry with it a memory of the duration of its making, and slowness begets slowness. This particular sense of the duration of the photographic portrait has been part-and-parcel of the experience since people were first braced into place before a daguerreotype camera or a collodian-sensitised plate. (And this reminds me that the causal relationship between digital photography and the particular pose it seems to have encouraged has other precedents in photographic history: the thousand-mile stare that is such a prominent attribute of daguerreotype portraits was an artefact of the brace which kept sitters' heads and bodies in place long enough for the exposure.)

But I think this sense of duration also reflects an aspect of 'good photography' as it was understood by the woman after whom this wonderful prize is named. In 1938, Olive Cotton noted that 'good' (by which I think she meant 'considered') photographs were imbued with 'discernment and personality'. A 'good photograph' doesn't simply idealise its subject: content and production sit in close (although not necessarily comfortable) proximity. The value of Cotton's message stands. Just as was the case in 1938, to rise above the fray a photographic portrait should balance the personality of its maker and the presence of its subject – the 'fray' now being the social media portrait. Many of the photographers whose work I selected for this year's award seem conscious of this.

## Not quite 'boom time'

I want to acknowledge here that the photographs selected for this year's Olive Cotton Award represent, in spite of the best intentions of a 'blind judging' process, a partial view. I was drawn to those images that spoke of empathy and honesty, and to those that revel in the marvelous ambiguity the really brave people in our world today embrace. I was also drawn to those images that drew attention to the performative nature of the act of photographing someone else. Acknowledging this simply rounds out the tripartite social network that has most often been presupposed by the photographic portrait.

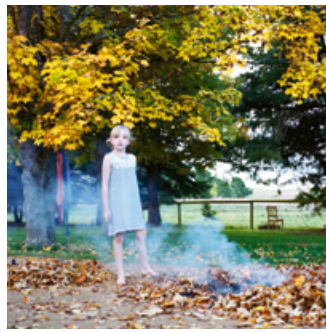
At the same time, I have sought to ensure that the shortlist reflects the scope of the full field of entries. This might account, for example, for the substantial number of images of Indigenous Australians: aside from the ongoing, and for me troubling, anthropological nature of some of these images, it is clear that Indigenous and non-Indigenous photographers continue to use the photographic portrait as a means of assisting us to navigate the complex network of political, social and historical impediments to proper recognition. I was also struck by the number of images that seem to reflect anxiety. Perhaps it is intrinsic to the physiognomy of the photographic portrait (regardless of whenever it was taken), that unless the subject is smiling, that person seems uncertain. Whatever the case, from the evidence of the entries, we currently seem pretty anxious.



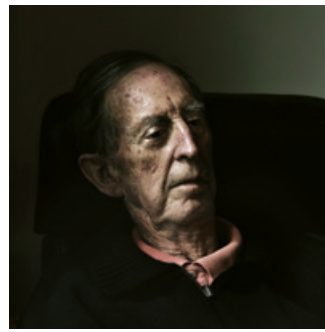
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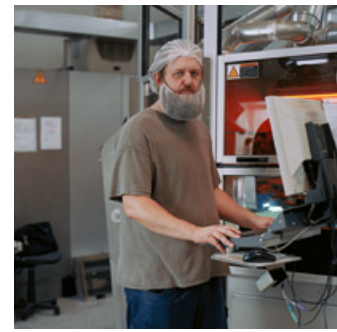
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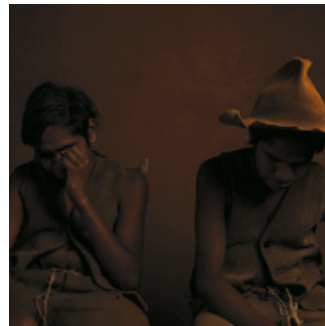
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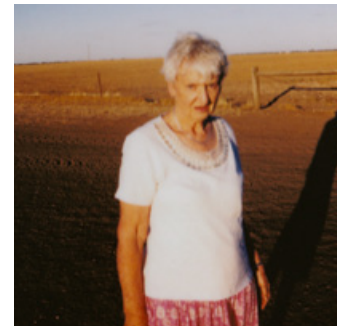
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1 **Matthew ABBOTT**  
born 1984, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Trey and Tiffany - Brewarrina flood plains, NSW* 2015  
hand printed silver gelatin print on fibre paper

2 **Stephen BACCON**  
born 1971, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Dean* 2017  
giclee print

3 **Donna BAILEY**  
born 1983, lives and works in Kangaroo Flat VIC  
*Phoebe Scarlett* 2017  
type C print

10 **Chris BUDGEON**  
born 1965, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Henry in Fading Light* 2017  
pigment print

11 **Margaret Ellen BURNS**  
born 1983, lives and works in the Blue Mountains NSW  
*Paul* 2017  
digital print on cotton rag

12 **Daniel BUSHAWAY**  
born 1977, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Barry* 2017  
inkjet print

4 **Warwick BAKER**  
born 1983, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Jed & Sam* 2016  
type C print

5 **Vanessa BERTAGNOLE**  
born 1983, lives and works in Brisbane QLD  
*New Mum - self portrait* 2016  
inkjet print

6 **Jeremy BLINCOE**  
born 1983, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Simba Warnir (Wadeye)* 2017  
pigment inkjet print

13 **Brett CANET-GIBSON**  
born 1981, lives and works in Perth WA  
*Trevor Jamieson* 2016  
digital print

14 **Eva COLLINS**  
born 1946, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Zosia's plan* 2017  
digital print

15 **Michael COOK**  
born 1968, lives and works in Brisbane QLD  
*Memories* 2017  
inkjet print on Hahnemühle photo rag  
Courtesy of Andrew Baker Art Dealer, Brisbane and  
This is No Fantasy + Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

7 **James BRICKWOOD**  
born 1983, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*British Comedian Bill Bailey* 2016  
type C print

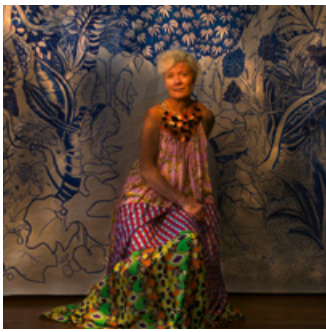
8 **Rachel Sara BROMBERG**  
born 1960, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*A kiss to ease the pain* 2017  
digital print on metallic paper

9 **Isaac BROWN**  
born 1980, lives and works in Brisbane QLD  
*He is me as a stranger to myself* 2016  
inkjet print

16 **Michael CORRIDORE**  
born 1962, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Doolan Boys* 2016  
pigment print

17 **Christopher DAY**  
born 1978, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Soft Bust* 2016  
pigment print

18 **Jeremy DRAPE**  
born 1983, lives and works in Canberra ACT  
*Mum on the farm* 2016  
Polaroid



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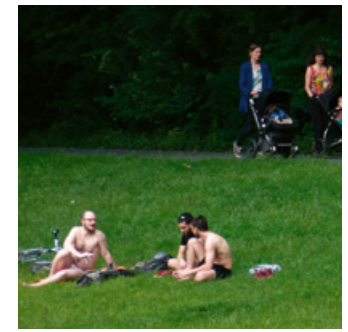
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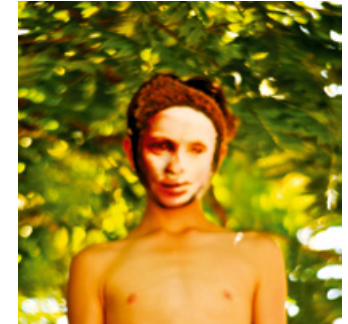
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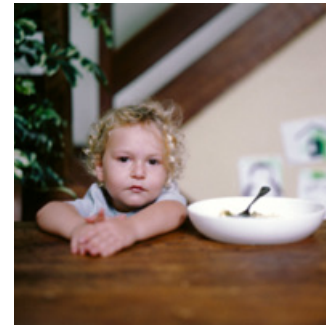
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19 **Marian DREW**  
born 1960, lives and works in Brisbane QLD  
*Lydia Pearson - Night Garden* 2017  
pigment print on cotton paper  
Courtesy of Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney and  
This is no Fantasy + Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

20 **Ella DREYFUS**  
born 1960, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Childhood* 2017  
chromogenic print

23 **Meryl FAIRSKYE**  
born 1950, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Sylvia* 2017  
pigment print on gloss photo paper

26 **Tina FIVEASH**  
born 1970, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Ghost* 2017  
digital print

22 **Jenny EVANS**  
born 1965, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Isabella* 2017  
digital print

25 **George FETTING**  
born 1964, lives and works in Leichhardt NSW  
*Captain Reckless #3* 2016  
inkjet media

21 **Stephen DUPONT**  
born 1967, lives and works in Austinmer NSW  
*Up in the Sky* 2016  
giclee digital print

24 **Jacqueline FELSTEAD**  
born 1976, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Loss in a simulated environment, Audrey* 2017  
inkjet print from 3D model

27 **Dean GOLJA**  
born 1960, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Astrid* 2016  
digital print on aluminium

28 **Mike GRAY**  
born 1971, lives and works in Perth WA  
*Mum and Dad* 2015  
inkjet print

31 **Kelly HUSSEY-SMITH**  
born 1982, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Self Portrait of the Mother as a Young Artist* 2016  
inkjet print

34 **Katrin KOENNING**  
born 1978, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Woman* 2016  
pigment print

29 **Kalem HORN**  
born 1994, lives and works in Brisbane QLD  
and Lismore NSW  
*Dollhouse* 2017  
digital print on Fuji Pearl paper

32 **Ingvar KENNE**  
born 1965, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Riley Gray, Port Pirie, South Australia* 2016  
type C print

35 **Thom KOTIS**  
born 1975, works in Yamba NSW  
*Sonny Rhodes* 2017  
Polaroid

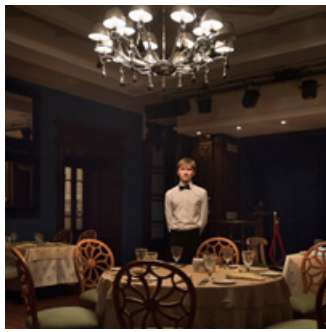
30 **Penelope HUNT**  
born 1965, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Luncheon on the grass* 2016  
pigment print on Canson Velin rag

33 **Mark KIMBER**  
born 1953, lives and works in Adelaide SA  
*Dash on the Summer Solstice* 2016  
pigment print

36 **Jon LEWIS**  
born 1950, lives and works at Wombeyan Caves  
NSW  
*Sterling's grief* 2017  
digital print



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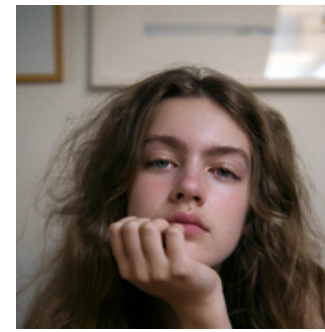
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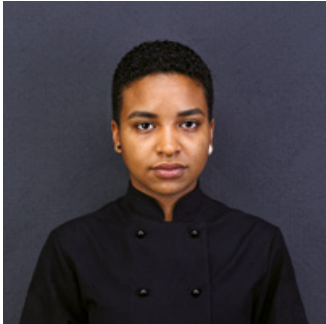
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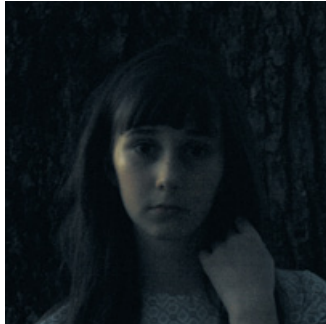
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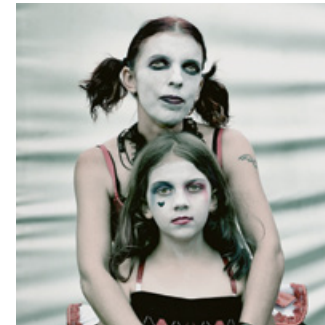
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37 **Michael MARZIK**  
born 1961, lives and works in Cairns QLD  
*Tijn, collector of plants* 2017  
pigment print

38 **Joseph McGLENNON**  
born 1957, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Waiting* 2017  
digital print on Hahnemühle fine art paper  
Courtesy of Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney

39 **Jason McNAMARA**  
born 1971, lives and works in Ipswich QLD  
*Clyde and Mary* 2016  
digital print

46 **Travis PATERSON**  
born 1975, lives and works in Main Arm NSW  
*once* 2017  
Lambda print (from Polaroid original)

47 **Zorica PURLIJA**  
born 1964, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Yumi 14* 2017  
digital print  
Courtesy of Sara Roney Gallery, Sydney

48 **Krystle RICCI**  
born 1983, lives and works in Perth WA  
*Bear hugs* 2016  
pigment print on matte paper

40 **Rod McNICOL**  
born 1946, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Timmily* 2017  
digital print

41 **Ari MESSINA**  
born 2004, lives and studies in Northern NSW  
*Dark side of a girl* 2017  
pigment inkjet print

42 **Jacqueline MITELMAN**  
born 1950, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Tala, from Hama to Melbourne* 2017  
inkjet print

49 **Renate RIENMUELLER**  
born 1989, lives and works in the  
Northern Beaches, Sydney NSW  
*Our friend Jack* 2016  
wet plate collodion ambrotype

50 **Lynne ROBERTS-GOODWIN**  
born 1954, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Simeon Kronenberg* 2016  
pigment inkjet print on Hahnemühle photo rag  
Courtesy of the artist and Kronenberg Wright Artists Projects

51 **Julie RRAP**  
lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Doublespeak* 2017  
digital print on rag paper  
Courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

43 **Anita MODOK**  
born 1961, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*in absentia: Judy Cassab's bedroom* 2017  
pigment inkjet print on Hahnemühle silver rag

44 **Matthew NEWTON**  
born 1970, lives and works in Hobart TAS  
*The Season* 2016  
digital print

45 **Polixeni PAPAPETROU**  
born 1960, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*My ghost* 2017  
screen print on gold metallic foil and linen

52 **David RYRIE**  
born 1968, lives and works in the  
Southern Highlands NSW  
*The Gravity of Little Things No. 1* 2016  
pigment ink on paper

53 **Steven SIEWERT**  
born 1964, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Rachel and Abby* 2017  
digital print

54 **Roger SKINNER**  
born 1950, lives and works in Muswellbrook NSW  
*Sky float* 2017  
digital print



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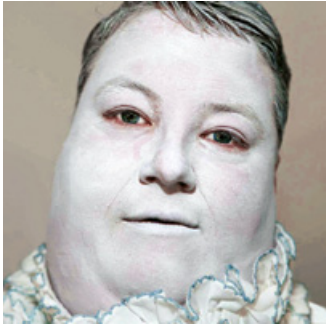
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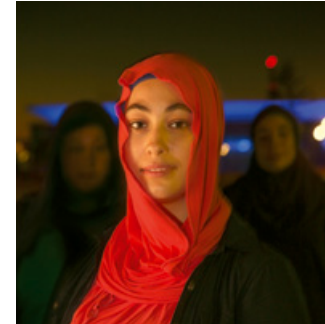
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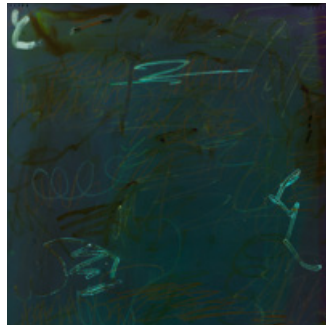
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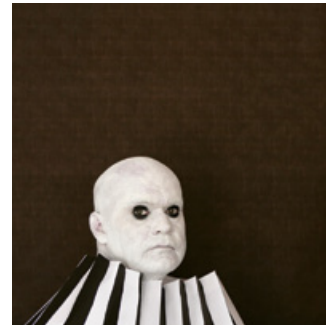
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72 \*

55 **Tristan STILL**  
born 1980, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Simon* 2016  
silver gelatin print, developed with urine

58 **Virginia SZARAZ**  
born 1961, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Pagliaccio* 2017  
digital print

61 **CJ TAYLOR**  
born 1966, lives and works on the  
Fleurieu Peninsula SA  
*Untitled (branch #1)* 2017  
pigment print on cotton rag  
Courtesy of Galleria Marcolini, Italy

56 **Jacqui STOCKDALE**  
born 1968, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*The Daughter's Path* 2017  
type C print  
Courtesy of This is No Fantasy + Dianne Tanzer Gallery,  
Melbourne

59 **Sarah TALAJ**  
born 1996, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Simon* 2016  
inkjet print

62 **Craig TUFFIN**  
born 1969, lives and works in Northern NSW  
*Gymea* 2017  
wet plate collodion ambrotype

57 **Donna SULWAY**  
born 1959, lives and works in Canberra ACT  
*The Poliedrica* 2016  
digital print

60 **Angela TARLINTON**  
born 1976, lives and works in Newcastle NSW  
*Sam* 2017  
silver gelatin print

63 **Justine VARGA**  
born 1984, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Maternal Line* 2017  
chromogenic hand printed photograph from  
5 x 4 inch negative  
Courtesy of the artist and Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide

64 **John WATSON**  
born 1961, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Saturday morning Chongqing, China* 2017 2017  
inkjet print on rag

67 **Julie WILLIAMS**  
born 1961, lives and works in Vale of Clwydd NSW  
*Deuce - self portrait* 2017  
pigment print on cotton rag

70 **Yiorgos ZAFIRIOU**  
born 1971, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Uninvited* 2017  
pigment print

65 **Nicole WELLS**  
born 1975, lives and works in Point Clare NSW  
*My Mother, The Matriarch* 2017  
digital print

68 **Michael WILLIAMS**  
born 1956, lives and works in Melbourne VIC  
*Toama and her sisters (from the Yarra Delta series)* 2017  
chromogenic print

71 **Anne ZAHALKA**  
born 1957, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
Assisted by Allison Rose  
*The Papapetrou Family* 2017  
dye sublimation on chromalux metal  
Courtesy of the artist and ARC ONE Gallery, Melbourne

66 **Louise WHELAN**  
born 1967, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Sonny* 2017  
pigment print

69 **Annette WILLIS**  
born 1956, lives and works in Adelaide SA  
*Ali Cobby Eckermann at home in her van* 2017  
silver halide photographic print on Kodak lustre  
paper

72 **Sharon ZWI**  
born 1957, lives and works in Sydney NSW  
*Mark with Fra Fercaldo* 2017  
pigment inkjet print

## Olive Cotton

Olive Cotton (1911-2003) discovered the art of photography during childhood and was committed to the practice throughout her life. After gaining an Arts degree, she worked successfully as a photographer at Max Dupain's Sydney studio until the end of World War II. She was married to Dupain from 1937–1939 and then in 1944 married Ross McInerney and moved to the bush near Koorawatha, NSW. For 20 years she had no access to darkroom facilities, but continued taking photographs.

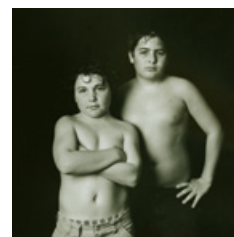
In 1964 Cotton opened a small studio in Cowra and in 1985, after a 40 year absence, re-emerged with her first solo exhibition at the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney. She then concentrated on rediscovering and printing her life's work.

In 2000 the Art Gallery of NSW showed *Olive Cotton*, a major retrospective of Cotton's work, curated by Helen Ennis, lecturer at the Australian National University, Canberra School of Art. In 2016-17 Cotton was featured in the National Gallery of Australia's touring exhibition *Max & Olive: The Photographic life of Olive Cotton & Max Dupain* curated by Dr Shaune Lakin.



*Olive* 1943  
Jean Lorraine (Jean McInerney)  
courtesy of Sally McInerney

## Previous Winners



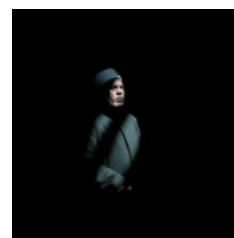
**2005**  
Judge: Sally McInerney

**Ella DREYFUS**  
*The Lads: Nadz and Dax*  
(detail)



**2006**  
Judge: Dr Gene Sherman

**Siri HAYES**  
*Monty / Sally*



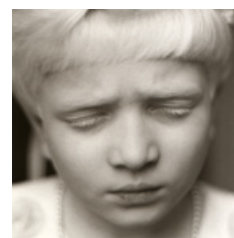
**2007**  
Judge: Richard Moore

**George FETTING**  
*Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali, former Mufti of Australia – Lakemba*  
(detail)



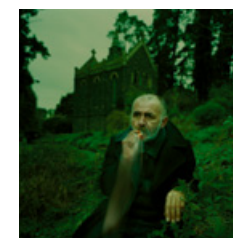
**2008**  
Judge: Rex Dupain

**Emily PORTMANN**  
*The Stone* (detail)



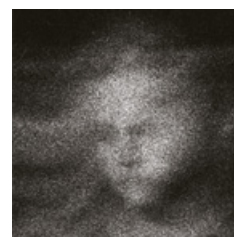
**2009**  
Judge: Dean Sewell

**Richard O'FARRELL**  
*Savitri* (detail)



**2011**  
Judge: Naomi Cass

**Tamara DEAN**  
*Damien Skipper* (detail)



**2013**  
Judge: Helen Ennis

**Trent PARKE**  
*Candid portrait of a woman on a street corner* (detail)



**2015**  
Judge: Stephen Dupont

**Natalie GRONO**  
*Pandemonium's shadow*  
(detail)





Front cover:

**Brett CANET-GIBSON**

born 1965, lives and works in Perth WA

*Trevor Jamieson (detail) 2016*

digital print

Above:

**Ingvar KENNE**

born 1965, lives and works in Sydney NSW

*Riley Gray, Port Pirie, South Australia 2016*

type C print



**FRIENDS**

Tweed Regional Gallery &  
Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc.



**Create NSW**

Arts, Screen & Culture

The Olive Cotton Award is funded by the family of Olive Cotton with additional purchase awards funded by the Friends of Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre Inc. Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW

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**TWEED REGIONAL GALLERY**

& MARGARET OLLEY ART CENTRE | MURWILLUMBAH

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